

Lecture Performance -

Winds and Tonal worlds – a reflective performance on sound and modality.

ABSTRACT

When I try to answer questions from students how I still find motivation to practice, I've come to realize that the real reason for practicing is not that I want to improve my skills, but rather because I feel so good doing it! As a wind player I need to have a free breathing to get a full sound and while improvising I am focused on the music being played, something outside my ego. Breathing and mantra; two things associated with meditation.

In this performance I will play solo on bass flutes and soprano saxophone as well as present my research on inner spaces and improvisation.

Medical research shows that a calm and deep breathing positively affects our body and mind. Neurological studies on music in the brain shows that musical improvisation activates many parts of the brain, especially those associated with flow. This is also confirmed by my own practice as a pedagogue and artist. Thus, it seems like the combination of conscious breathing and improvisation can make the playing more qualitative, concentrated and pleasant. With an awareness of an inner space of sound and mind, the artist, instrument, room and listener vibrate together.

I suggest that with an effortless and creative approach to playing, the simplest or most challenging exercise can be a time of qualitative attentiveness and a way to increase the full potential of the artist. I also suggest a method to modal studies with inspiration from Indian and Arabic classical music implemented in a Western context where the embracing of the modal characteristics is essential.

This knowledge can be implemented in both artistic practice and in teaching situations on all levels and introduces a new approach to scale studies in Western music. Other innovative contributions are the use modal structures from different traditions and extended techniques in an improvised and melodic context.

Lecture Performance

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Music: Care - Moving. Solo for Contrabass flute

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MEDICAL RESEARCH

Medical research shows that a calm and deep breathing positively affects our body and mind. (Goleman, Davidson). Studies at Sahlgrenska Academy, (Gothenburg, Sweden) on heart rate

variability on singers shows that when singing a song together our heart rate variability is synchronized. (Vickhoff).

Neurological studies at Karolinska Institute, (Stockholm, Sweden) on music in the brain are using improvisation as a model. MR screening shows that musical improvisation activates many parts of the brain, and more cross connections than when playing after a score. Parts that are active are especially those which also are associated with flow, like pleasure and lower self-criticism.

Flow is a psychological state where the task and your knowledge match so that you are challenged but within your capacity.

MODALITY

A way to create a tonal limitation is to play and practice within a mode. I work with a method to modal studies with inspiration from Indian and Arabic classical music implemented in a Western context where the embracing of the modal characteristics is essential.

*i.e. **Maqam** (a valuable place), **raga** (to color with beauty).*

I will play an example which starts in a C Augmented scale. This 6-note scale developed into its “mother scale”, Messiaens 3rd mode. The opening in rubato has the role of presenting the tonal world like a “taksim” or an “alap” which means free improvised introduction

Music:

Augmented Reflection. Alto Flute and electronics

A useful way to practice is to start with the same tonic i.e. when playing the church modes you start on C jonian, C dorian, C phrygian etc.

Doing that means that you need to be theoretically aware of how the mode is constructed, you need to challenge your skills of playing in different keys and to do this in an improvised and creative way develops your artistic ability to make music out of the practice.

With an effortless and creative approach to playing, I suggest that the simplest or most challenging exercise can be a time of qualitative attentiveness and a way to increase the full potential of the artist.

EXTENDED TECHNIQUES

Extended techniques are quite common when playing contemporary composed music and free improvisation. As you may have heard I am using a palette of sounds within a more tonal and melodic context.

I will give you a demonstration on sounds from the flutes has been used to create rhythmical and tonal foundation. All sounds come from the wind instruments,

The pedal point is C starting with phrases variations on minor scales. Then moving towards a Phrygian mode with additional #3 and #7.

Music: Sounds of Sufi. Alto Flute and electronics
